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## Poindexter Will Meet Informally With Lawmakers

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 17 — In an apparent effort to avoid a clash with Congress, the Administration said today that President Reagan's national security adviser would hold informal meetings with two Congressional intelligence committees that are looking into American arms shipments to Iran.

Both panels are preparing for hearings on the subject scheduled to open Friday.

The announcement appeared intended to avert a confrontation with Congress over the issue of whether members of the Presidential staff

would be compelled to appear before the committees. In the past, members of the National Security Council staff have not appeared before Congressional committees.

Larry Speakes, the White House press secretary, said that the Director of Central Intelligence, William J. Casey, would testify before the committees in separate hearings on Friday.

He also said that the national security adviser, Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, "will speak informally with the committees, and he has already and he will continue to do so." Mr. Speakes added, "So, we'll be as

cooperative as we possibly can."

Some members of the House intelligence committee, citing the operational role of the N.S.C. staff in the Iran program, have said they want to hear directly from the key Presidential advisers who supervised the contacts and arms shipments.

The Reagan Administration and its predecessors have refused to allow the national security adviser or his aides to give formal testimony to Congressional committees. The doctrine cited is executive privilege, which is invoked to preserve the privacy of internal deliberations of the White House.

Several members of the committees said they would wait to see the amount of information provided by Mr. Casey before deciding whether further witnesses would be needed.

"I won't know until I hear the rest of the information," said Senator Bill Bradley, Democrat of New Jersey. "There are major questions raised by the use of the N.S.C. as a kind of operations force, and I think these questions have to be dealt with."

Mr. Bradley, adding to the chorus of Congressional criticism of the dealings with Iran, remarked: "What the President said was insufficient. This was very clearly buying hostages with arms. What he ought to do is say he made a big mistake. He cannot assert things that are palpably contrary to what certainly appears to be the facts and be convincing."

The intelligence committees have in the past held informal meetings with Presidential advisers. In 1985, for instance, the House intelligence committee met with Robert C. McFarlane, then the national security adviser, on the issue of whether the White House was violating the Congressional ban on aid to the Nicaraguan rebels.

The meeting did not include sworn testimony and no transcript was made, according to Congressional officials.

Representative Dick Cheney, a Wyoming Republican and a supporter of the Administration's efforts in Iran, said he believed that Congressional Democrats would probably try to put more restraints on the national security adviser. One possible proposal, he said, could involve requiring the adviser to face Senate confirmation.

"There's no question that those issues will be raised in the hearings," Mr. Cheney said. "The substantive question is whether they can gin up enough support."